



Flag Football Rules

Division 1	Kindergarten and First Grade
Division 2	Second and Third Grades
Division 3	Fourth and Fifth Grades
Division 4	Sixth and Seventh Grades
Division 5	Eighth Grade

1. PLAYERS

- A) Players participating in Youth Flag Football must be currently enrolled in school (public or private).
- B) Players may participate in only **one (1)** organized Flag Football League/Division/Team sponsored by the City of Torrance Community Services Department.
- C) Players that are currently playing organized tackle football **are** eligible to play Flag Football.
- D) Once a player requests a refund, he/she cannot sign up again for that current sport season.
- E) Players may play in a higher division, but not in a lower division.
- F) A coach wanting to add a player must first get clearance from the City of Torrance Community Services Department. **No new players can be added after the third league game.**
- G) A team consists of at least ten (10) players.
- H) A team must have five (5) players to start a game. After a grace period of five (5) minutes, the team with fewer than five (5) players may borrow from the other team and play a practice game.

2. SUBSTITUTIONS

- A) Substitutions are unlimited.
- B) Every player in attendance must play for a time equivalent to a quarter of the game.

3. EQUIPMENT

- A) All players must wear rubber-soled gym shoes or rubber cleats. Bare feet, street shoes or metal cleats are not permitted.
- B) Helmets and shoulder pads are not permitted.
- C) Players wearing **red, yellow, or striped** shorts are **not** permitted to play.
- D) Players may not wear baseball caps, bandannas, headbands, or jewelry of any sort during games. Mouth guards and goggles are permitted.

- E) All game balls will be provided by the City of Torrance Community Services Department. The ball sizes for each division are listed below:

Division 1	Pee Wee
Division 2 and 3	Junior
Division 4 and 5	Intermediate

- F) Shirts **must be** tucked into shorts. **Cutting** of the shirt is not allowed.
- G) The City of Torrance Community Services Department will provide teams with official belts and flags for use during league games. Flags and flag belts **cannot** be covered by the shirt. Failure to follow this rule will result in an **unsportsmanlike penalty (12 yards L.O.D.)**.

3. **GENERAL RULES**

- A) All players must be listed on the “**Official Team Roster**” form.
- B) Coaches playing ineligible players will be suspended for an indefinite period of time. The ineligible player will also be suspended and not allowed to play during the current sports season.

NOTE: Questions regarding the eligibility of players may be raised verbally at any time by a coach or the program Supervisor.

4. **LENGTH OF GAMES**

Games will be played in 24 minute running halves.

5. **REST PERIOD**

A three (3) minute rest period will be allowed at halftime.

6. **TIME-OUTS**

- A) Each team is allowed two (2) 30-second time-outs per half.
- B) In case of emergency or injury, an **official** time-out will be called. Any player responsible for an **official** time-out must leave the field for at least one (1) play.

7. **GAME CLOCK**

- A) The clock is running for the entire game until the last two (2) minutes of the second half at which point it will stop for time-outs, scoring, penalties, out-of-bounds, incomplete passes or change of possession if the point spread is twelve (12) points or less.
- B) Time expiration with a defensive penalty gives the offense the choice to accept the penalty and have one final untimed offensive play, or end the game.
- C) There will be **no** overtime period.

8. **KICK-OFFS**

- A) **Divisions 1, 2 and 3** - There will be **no** kick-offs. Instead, the ball will be placed on the first zone line to begin the game, after halftime, and following a score. There are no free kicks on safeties. If the point spread becomes twelve (12) points or more, the team that is down will start at the midfield zone line.

- B) **Divisions 4 and 5** - Kick-offs will be from the first zone line. The City of Torrance Community Services Department will provide tees for kicking.

Any kick that is dropped on an attempted reception will become a **dead ball** where it was contacted by the first offensive player. Any defensive player touching a kicked ball will result in a **dead ball**. A ball that hits the ground before being touched by an offensive or defensive player may be picked up and run with by the receiving team. **On kicks, any dead ball in the end zone will result in a touchback.**

9. SCORING

Touchdown	Six Points
Conversion (3 yards)	One Point
Conversion (7 yards)	Two Points
Safety	Two Points

- A) **Point after touchdown** - The scoring team will request a conversion try of 1 or 2 points. They have one (1) offensive play to score.
- B) **Safety** - Occurs when an offensive ball carrier enters the end zone and has their flag pulled, runs out of the end zone, or drops the ball into/out of the end zone. A ball tossed/thrown backwards that breaks the plane of the end zone will also result in a safety.

10. HUDDLES

- A) The offensive team **must form a huddle** (all eight players within arm's distance and minimum five yards from the sideline) prior to every offensive play. Illegal huddles will result in an **unsportsmanlike** penalty.
- B) During the last two (2) minutes of the 2nd half, teams do not need to huddle prior to running an offensive play.

11. PUTTING THE BALL INTO PLAY

Division 1, 2 and 3	35 seconds
Division 4 and 5	25 seconds

- A) The ball is put into play with a snap from the center between the legs. **No center sneak is allowed.**
- B) The center may adjust the ball prior to the snap.
- C) After touching the ball, the center cannot remove their hands or move the ball to simulate a snap. Either may result in a **false start** or **unsportsmanlike** penalty.
- D) Failure to huddle and put the ball into play in the designated time will result in a **delay of game** penalty.
- E) **Motion** - One (1) offensive player may be in lateral or backwards motion at the time of the snap/hike.

12. **DOWN**

- A) An offensive team has **four (4)** downs to advance the ball from the point of possession to the next forward zone line to get another set of downs. If the team fails to reach the zone line in **four (4)** downs the opposing team will take possession at the point of the last dead ball.
- B) A team may choose to **punt** on 4th down rather than attempting to reach the next forward zone line. **Punts** must be declared prior to breaking the huddle. **No snap/hike** is required on punts; the punter may pick up the ball prior to kicking it. Once the ball is in the hands of the kicker, the kicking team may not move until the ball is kicked.

13. **OFFENSIVE TEAM**

- A) **Division 1 and 2** - The ball carrier **may not** run up the middle. The middle is defined as between the guard positions and will be marked by cones five (5) feet on either side of the center.
- B) **Division 1 only** - There will be only **one (1)** direct quarterback run per series of downs.

14. **PASSING**

- A) **All** players on the offensive team are eligible to receive passes.
- B) A catch is the act of establishing possession of a live ball in flight. If a player attempts to catch a ball while they are in the air, they must contact the legal playing surface with one foot for the catch to be legal. Referee judgment will decide if a player would have made a legal catch prior to an opponent's contact.
- C) Only one (1) forward pass can be thrown per down.
- D) If a player is close enough to contact the quarterback, any attempt to block a pass behind the line of scrimmage will result in a penalty. The defender should be going for the flags, not the ball.

15. **BLOCKING**

- A) Offensive players may only use standing blocking techniques.
- B) Any blocks below the waist or from behind are illegal.
- C) Players may contact the opponent's body between the shoulders and waist, provided the technique is legal. The legal techniques are as follows:
 - Extending the arms is allowed, **as long as** contact with the defensive player is kept while arms are extended.
 - Elbows may be inside or outside the shoulders.
 - Hands shall remain inside the frame of the blocker and opponent's body.
 - Slapping or striking is not allowed.

16. **DOWNING THE BALL CARRIER**

- A) In order to down a ball carrier, either flag must be pulled from the belt by an opponent.

- B) In the case where a flag is missing or flags are not along the ball carrier's sides, contact by an opposing player will result in downing of the ball carrier.
- C) A downed ball carrier will give the ball to the closest referee.

17. PENALTIES/UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

A) **Ball Carrier**

- Running over or through a defensive player
- Using their hands or ball to shield their flags from a defensive player
- Pushing their blockers with their free hand
- Leaving their feet to avoid having their flags pulled

B) **Offensive Team**

- No huddle
- More than one (1) forward pass
- Running up the middle (Division 1 and 2)
- Multiple QB direct runs (Division 1)
- Simulated snap
- Illegal blocking technique

C) **Defensive Team**

- Rushing up the middle/between the cones (Division 1)
- Blocking a pass in close contact to the quarterback
- Not making a play for the flag of a ball carrier
- Pushing a ball carrier out of bounds
- Vocalizing/movement to simulate offensive snap/hike

D) **General**

- Inappropriate language/taunting
- Disrespecting referees
- Teams being outside of designated area (five feet from sidelines and outer zone cones)

18. EJECTIONS

Any player, coach or parent ejected from a game will also be suspended from their next scheduled game or longer. This includes tournaments, and if the game is the last of the season, the suspension will be for the first game in the next sport season that the coach/player/parent participates. A suspended coach/player/parent shall not be allowed inside the gym where the game is being played or have any contact with their team for the entire duration of the game in which he/she is suspended. Depending on the circumstance, the suspension could be for more than one game. **Furthermore, any player, coach or parent ejected twice during the season will be subject to ejection from the league for an indefinite period of time.**

19. COACHES

- A) Only one (1) coach and one (1) assistant coach in the team designated area (five feet from sidelines and outer zone cones).
- B) **Division 1 only** – Two (2) coaches are allowed on the field during the game.

20. SPECTATORS

Spectators must stay in the designated area (ten yards from the sidelines and end zone lines).

21. DECISIONS OF THE OFFICIALS

- A) The decision of the officials is **final**.
- B) All rule interpretations will be made at the time they occur.
- C) The **only** grounds for a protest will be on the eligibility of a player. A protest must be submitted in writing to the City of Torrance Community Services Department by 5:00 p.m. on the **next** working day.

